



Trends shoppers
can expect to see
this holiday season

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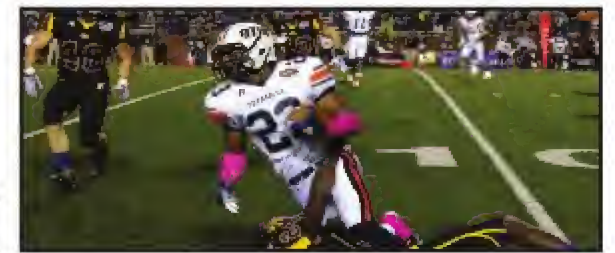
Vanguard Theatre
performs first show
in new building

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Boyds find family
at UTM

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DJ McNeil makes
strides on and off
the field

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the pacer



November 20, 2013

Independent voice of the University of Tennessee at Martin

Volume 86, Issue 7

Student makes UTM history in Nashville

Ashley Marshall

Staff Writer

For the second time in UTM history, a member of the UTM TISL delegation has been elected governor.

Jamie Arnett of Memphis, a Political Science and Communications senior, was elected to the post Nov. 16 in Nashville at the 44th General Assembly of TISL, the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature.

Arnett is the first female from UTM to be elected governor and only the fourth female to win the post in TISL history. She also is the second UTM student to be elected governor, with a 39-year gap from the only other UTM student to become a TISL governor. Roy Herron won the post in 1974 and later served as a longtime state senator. Herron now chairs the Tennessee Democratic Party and one of his sons, John Herron, was a member of this year's UTM delegation.

Before being nominated for governor, Arnett held a position in TISL as the Secretary of State.

"TISL has been a giant learning experience for me. You don't think you're going to learn this much from something you participate in on a yearly

basis. Serving on the Executive Council, you learn a lot and learn exactly what you want to do in life and what you do not want to do. This experience will definitely help aid me in deciding what I want to do in my future endeavors, especially throughout my career after I graduate," Arnett said.

In her new role, Arnett has one particular goal in mind.

"I want a budget. Now we're going to see if we can gain some information from INGA, which is the Intercollegiate National Governors Association and MIG, the Model Illinois Government, and South Carolina and how they do their budgets. We've kind of taken an example from them and kind of twisted it around, and we're going to see if we can get us a budget," Arnett said.

"We're also going to try and get a new take on media with some different ideas."

Arnett also explained that winning the post was a shock and that she never thought she would run for governor.

"There have been very few times in my life that I have felt this blessed and loved. TISL 44 was a week to remember! I am so honored to be able to



Jamie Arnett was sworn in as elected governor at the 44th General Assembly of the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature on Nov. 16. Arnett is the first female and second UTM student to attain the position. | **Pacer Photos/Mary Jean Hall**

serve as the 45th Governor of TISL. I am so proud of the work that EC 44 did. I love every one of you! Tomorrow starts a new week and a new

beginning. Thanks everyone for making this so special," Arnett posted on Facebook.

TISL is a mock legislative program that allows students to

write, debate and pass legislation, and it is similar to the House and Senate of Tennessee.

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Viewpoints

COLUMN

Persona protects students from posting questionable material

Malorie Paine
Managing Editor, Print

Our society has become obsessed with social media.

People, on average, spend more time tweeting and updating Facebook posts than they spend talking to their friends in person. Social media is more than just a place to share pictures of your breakfast, lunch or dinner, though. Many employers are adding a search of potential employees' social media platforms as part of the hiring process. A scan of these platforms could prevent some people from being offered a job.

So, what happens when you post something that could compromise your future job? Enter: Persona, an application that allows its users to link their Twitter, Facebook and Google Plus accounts where they can be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

While this may sound like a "big brother" platform to some, Persona aims only to help its users remain reputable in the eyes of potential future employers. Persona scans each post for "questionable" content that could prove to be problematic in the professional world.

Because I was curious as to exactly how and whether this application worked, I signed up for Persona. I'm happy to say that it did, in fact, scan all of my social media feeds. It scanned back to the beginning of my history on each platform, and flagged certain words in a few posts. Although several of the words were not actually questionable in the context they were used, I am thankful it flagged because it showed me the app does actually work.

The application does not flag anything on your actual accounts. It marks everything under your Persona account

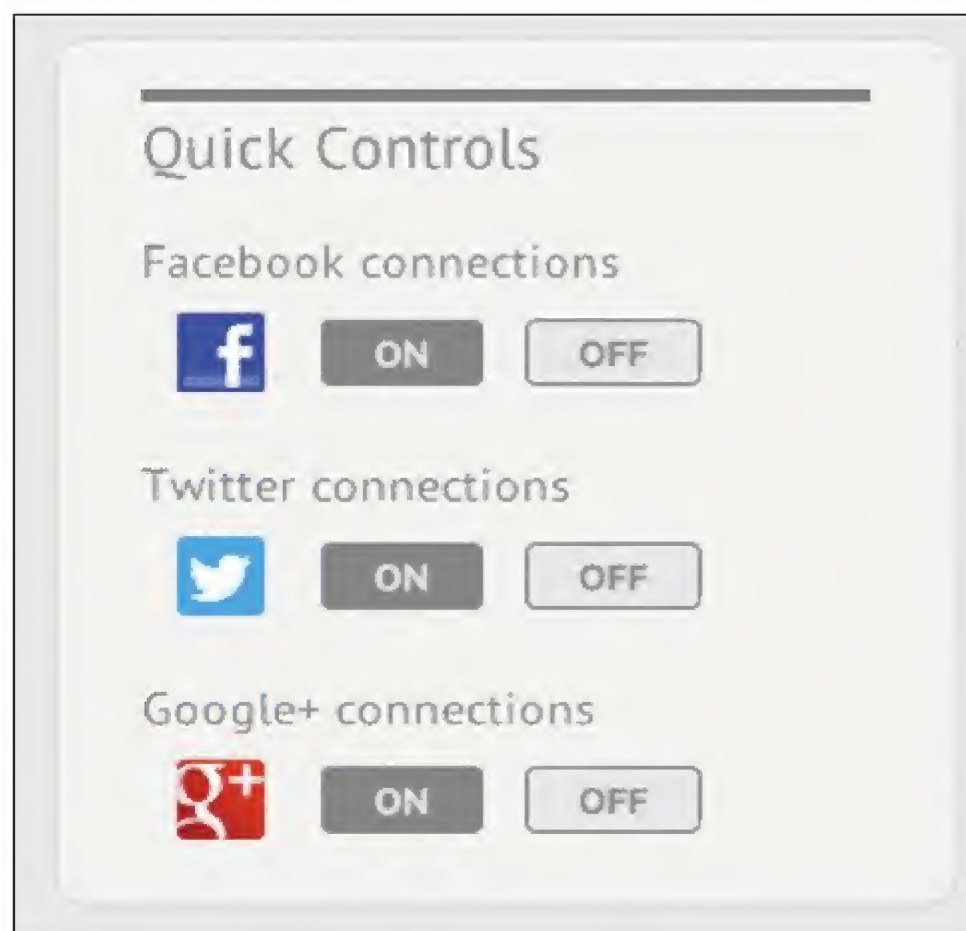
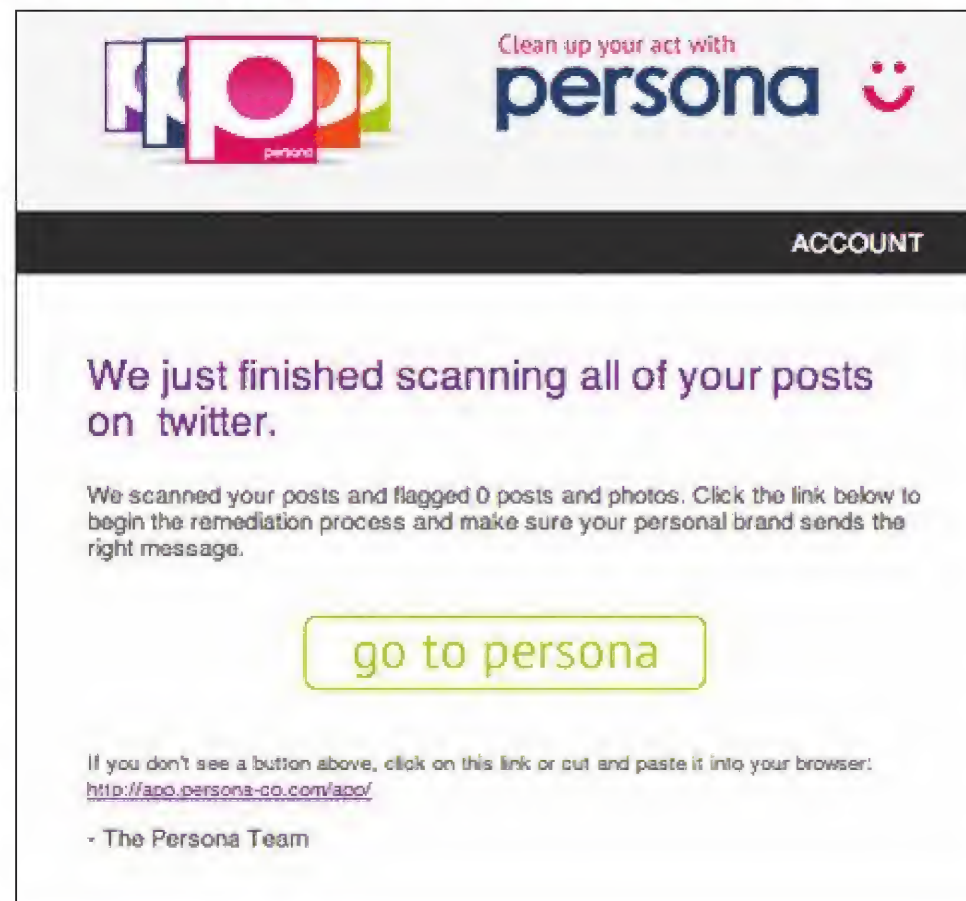
where you can view the posts at a later time. This allows you to make sure the post is something you want to keep. After it is marked, Persona will allow you to click on the post and take you to it on whichever platform you posted it where you can then delete it in case it needs to be removed.

Fortunately, the basic Persona app is free. It does, however, offer an app for purchase, Persona Pro, that scans pictures as well as text post, links etc.

The free account scans anything you post as well as anything people post on your wall or tweet at you. It also scans likes, hashtags, links and comments. The Persona Pro account scans up to 150 past images and up to 50 images per month. This includes tagged images.

When Persona finds anything that has been tagged as "questionable," it will email you immediately. If you have your cell phone number registered, it will also send a text to let you know it flagged a post. Persona will not remove the post for you; ultimately, the user still has to decide whether it is something that should be kept or deleted. Persona will also flag people who have posted "questionable" material to your profile. When it tags the people, it gives you the option to prevent those people from posting on your wall any more.

While personally it flagged 96 of my posts, a few of them were "happy birthday" wishes to some of my friends, so I'm not entirely sure why those were flagged as questionable. But, that does restore comfort that it will catch almost anything. After downloading the app just to try it out, I will definitely be keeping my platforms linked to it.



the pacer

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Viewpoints

EDITORIAL

The Pacer wishes readers a happy Thanksgiving

Halloween has come and gone, leaving only stomachaches, embarrassing costume photos and lackluster attendance for next day classes in its wake.

Veterans Day is also behind us, and soldiers and students both have the pleasure and relief of knowing that UTM's ROTC program is no longer scheduled for a 2015 closure.

You know what that means, readers: Christmas—sorry, Thanksgiving is on the mind.

You wouldn't guess Thanksgiving were the next major American holiday if you've turned on the

radio recently though. As early as Nov. 1, local and regional stations alike have been cranking out the holiday tunes in preparation for a single day in late December.

For years, we as a culture have just come to accept that major retailers can't get a big enough head start on the holiday season. Seeing a Christmas-themed ad for Coca-Cola or Wal-Mart is no surprise by now, but the fact that radio and television are right there with the retailers says more about us than it does about them.

Think of it this way: Christmas

season entertainment being pushed out so early means that someone is actually going to enjoy it. There are enough listeners and viewers that apparently love Christmas so much that they can't and won't wait for it.

And you better believe your local retailers are more than willing to meet demand, especially when faced with deciding between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Pacer understands that Christmas is much easier to market than Thanksgiving. After all, there isn't much a retailer can do about Thanksgiving outside of

selling fall-colored decorations and encouraging buyers to give chicken nuggets a break in favor of actual bird-shaped poultry products.

But that doesn't mean we should forego Thanksgiving and prepare for Christmas almost two months before the actual day. Thanksgiving is celebrated with the one thing no market can provide: family.

Sure Christmas is the same way, but the fact that we traditionally buy each other gifts on Christmas is what has the media up in arms. Christmas causes a convenient

sales boom for this time of year. That being said, why wouldn't the market rush into this holiday as quickly as possible?

But remember, holidays are a celebration, not an obligation. And any reason to get the family together is a good enough reason to do it.

So before you deck the halls and hang the mistletoe, The Pacer would like to ask that readers at least let Thanksgiving have its moment. The Pacer wishes its readers a happy Thanksgiving and an enjoyable break from classes.

COLUMN

Hazing: Sometimes it can go too far

Bradley Stringfield

Managing Editor, Online /
Sports Editor

Hazing has long been a tradition in many different circles of life, but there comes a point when humorous hazing becomes unnecessary meat-headed bullying that needs to be eliminated.

“Merriam-Webster defines hazing as, “the practice of playing unpleasant tricks on someone or forcing someone to do unpleasant things.”

Whether it's physical abuse or monetary exploitation, the tradition of hazing is one that is led with evil intent cleverly disguised as tradition.

Don't get me wrong, shaving half of someone's head and forcing

him or her to wear a ridiculous haircut for a week is hysterical. However, the common acts of physical and emotional abuse that some take part in is both pointless and shows ignorance.

Merriam-Webster defines hazing as, “the practice of playing unpleasant tricks on someone or forcing someone to do unpleasant things.”

There's a line between “forcing someone to do unpleasant things,” and just plain bullying and assault, that many people either aren't realizing or are simply ignoring.

There are plenty of stories of hazing that result in death that involve everything from kidnapping, to simply beating someone until they're unconscious. I guess it's not humorous when that person doesn't wake up, and I would imagine it sure doesn't invoke any sense of pride or tradition either.

From the military to fraternities, sororities, athletics and many other organizations, hazing has long been part of the foundation for newcomers. I can easily think of an alternative: support one another, have each other's backs and build one another up.

The idea of tearing someone down, emotionally or physically,

is not only barbaric, but just plain idiotic. The idea that this is what people need to forge a bond with another person is just plain sad.

“The idea of tearing someone down, emotionally or physically, is not only barbaric, but just plain idiotic. The idea that this is what people need to forge a bond with another person is just plain sad.”

This isn't an attack on Greek life, or any other specific organization. This is a concerned person calling out an old practice that has more than overstayed its welcome in American culture.

I'm not delirious. I realize this problem won't simply disappear into thin air, but something needs to be done.

COLUMN

Pacer editor shows support for ROTC program at UTM

Eric Brand

Viewpoints Editor

You may have noticed the less-than-subtle mentions of UTM's ROTC program that I tend to sprinkle onto this section every chance I get.

Don't get me wrong; all of The Pacer supports the ROTC, but the reason I bring it up so often is because, in my mind, the ROTC has the potential to produce some top-notch alumni.

Think about it: a college graduate with a degree from UTM, as well as the discipline and training of the U.S. Army. What employer wouldn't want that combination?

That's not to say that I think all UTM students should be in the ROTC, but I will say that students that are a part of the ROTC program have one heck of an advantage in the job market.

By now you can probably guess how I feel about the recent news that UTM's ROTC closing has been postponed: I'm quite pleased. And even

though they're not out of the woods yet, I'm confident that the program will do whatever is required to stay on campus.

You may be thinking I don't approve of antiwar sentiments because I support the ROTC in Martin, but I assure you it has nothing to do with it. I don't consider myself pro-war, but I do consider myself pro-military.

You see, a population of educated men and women that also happen to be soldiers is a great way to feel safe as an American. And since the population in the U.S. is enormous, I like knowing that a decent number of American citizens have the training for service in the military during times of war.

So if the ROTC has a chance of staying on campus, you better believe I'm going to voice my approval. I may not support every American military operation going on right now, but I most definitely support the soldiers that have pledged their loyalty to the U.S.

News

Arnett from Cover

Other students to be elected during the 44th General Assembly were Caleb Butler of Bethel University as Secretary of State, David Snapp as State Treasurer and Brandon Chrisman as Speaker of State, both of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Olivia O'Brien of Sewanee: The University of the South as Speaker Pro Tem of the Senate and Logan Brasher of Union University as Speaker of the House.

With a turnout of 22 UTM delegates attending the assembly, there was plenty of excitement and appreciation.

"TISL has completely altered the way I view Tennessee government. As a senator, I had the inspiring opportunity to debate bills and consider the well-being of Tennessee citizens. TISL has encouraged me to continue to serve UTM and to leave a positive mark on this truly amazing university," said Elizabeth Sanders, a Family and Consumer Science major.

The UTM delegation also was a Top Five Finalist for the Best Delegation, and Mark Maloney

won a Carlisle Award. That award was given to six representatives in the House for serving as outstanding legislators.

The UTM delegation also had a Moot Court team that participated in AMC3, or the Appellate Moot Court Collegiate Challenge. AMC3 is a program where Tennessee undergraduates argue appellate cases with their peers.

"Our AMC3 team did incredibly well for being a team with all first-year members. It was a great opportunity for us to prepare for our future careers in law. We're already looking forward to next year, when we can hopefully make it even further," said Kelley Parks, a junior Political Science major and UTM Moot Court chair.

For more information about the UTM delegation, contact advisors Dr. Bryan Parsons at bparsons@utm.edu and Dr. Chris Baxter at cbaxter@utm.edu.

To find out more about TISL, go to TISLonline.org or like them on [Facebook.com/TISLonline](https://www.facebook.com/TISLonline).



(Above) Members of the UTM delegation meet President Abe Lincoln during a reception. (Left) Senior Political Science major Dylan Gillespie argues a bill in the House chambers. Gillespie served as a Representative and Committee Chair during the 44th TISL General Assembly. | *Pacer Photos / Mary Jean Hall*



Thursday, Nov. 21

The UTM Department of Nursing asks everyone on campus to participate and spread the word about quitting smoking.

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News



Photo Credit/Interfaith

'Empty Bowls' marks 10th year of giving

Matt Borden

Guest Writer

The Empty Bowls lunch will be Saturday, Nov. 23, from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. on the Fine Arts Patio.

Empty Bowls is a program where local artisans create pieces of pottery, which are then sold to the public. All proceeds go towards feeding the less fortunate of their local community.

Since 2003, hundreds of hand-crafted pottery have been sold in Weakley County, with proceeds going to the We Care Ministry Food Bank in Martin. We Care Ministries recently used some of the money from Empty Bowls to purchase a walk in freezer, in which they store meat they receive from another local program, Hunters for the Hungry.

Empty Bowls first began in 2003. Local potter, David Macbeth, approached his pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church with the program idea. This year will mark the tenth year anniversary for the community wide event.

The Wesley Foundation in Martin has served as the chief sponsor for Empty Bowls, and in the past, the event took place at the Wesley house. As noted before, this year Empty Bowls will take place on UTM's campus.

Wesley coordinator, Becca Russell, explains the change.

"We feel it is only right to honor David MacBeth and all the hard work that he and his students has done to make Empty Bowls a reality by moving the meal to his studio. This will give patrons an opportunity to see where David and his students

craft these one-of-a-kind bowls," Russell said.

In addition, Russell shares some insight as to the significance of Empty Bowls, and the local community.

"What I love about Empty Bowls is that it draws our community together. Virtually all the churches participate and help provide soup, and this year we even have some local businesses serving as sponsors," Russell said.

For a \$10 donation, each person will receive a handcrafted bowl, as well as soup, crackers and a drink. In addition, you can purchase a T-shirt for an additional cost of \$10. The T-shirt commemorates the 10 year anniversary of the Empty Bowls event.

If there is inclement weather, the program will be moved indoors to the ceramic studio.

Thanksgiving: History behind the tradition

Maigan Bradbury

Pacer Writer

Giving thanks on the fourth Thursday of November has been a tradition for many people around the world for two centuries now.

Families gather around a large table to eat a great feast and talk about what they will buy on Black Friday. Where and why did this all begin? Who were the first to have such a feast? The history of Thanksgiving is not something that comes up at the table while everyone is feasting. The story of the first colonists settling in "the new world" in the 1600s is not as fun and happy as children are taught growing up.

According to the History channel website, in September of 1620, the Mayflower set out on a voyage to find a new world. The ship held over 100 passengers, which were families from England looking for a place to have religious freedom. Traveling for over two months was not the easiest, but they finally crossed the Massachusetts Bay and started to establish the village known as Plymouth.

That first winter was not easy for the pilgrims at all. Many of them were very sick, so they didn't even get off of the ship. History channel says that only half of the original passengers made it. In March of 1621, the rest of the settlers moved onto the shore. They were surprised to see an Abenaki Indian that greeted them in English. The next time the friendly Indian visited, he brought a friend, Squanto.

Squanto has a story of his own. He was a member of the Pawtuxet tribe, and he was kidnapped to become a slave. He was able to escape and make it back to his homeland just in time to greet the pilgrims. Squanto began to teach the people how to harvest and hunt. The rest of the spring and summer was very a plentiful time for the pilgrims.

In November of 1621, the

Governor of Plymouth, William Bradford, decided to treat everyone to a feast to celebrate their bountiful harvest. This included the local Indian tribes as well. The celebration lasted for three days.

Nowadays, there is turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie, but History channel says that it can be assumed that they had a little bit of a different menu. The pilgrims most likely had cooked goose, deer, corn and lobster. The sugar supply was short at the time, so there were no cakes or pies for this celebration.

By 1777, there were several days where people gave thanks for many reasons, such as another great harvest, the ending of a drought or the winning of a battle. Also in that year, the Continental Congress decided to have a national day of giving thanks in honor of the 13 colonies' victory over the British. Abraham Lincoln finally declared a specific day for everyone to participate in 1863 four months after the victory at Gettysburg. Lincoln made the fourth Thursday of every November Thanksgiving day.

By the 20th century, Thanksgiving had become just like any other holiday that people enjoyed and looked forward to because it was a day off from work. In the 1920s, the National Football League was formed, and the Detroit Lions came up with the idea of having a Thanksgiving Day game to help their attendance at their games. Also, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade started in 1924, and the department stores began to take advantage of everyone's day off as well.

Now that the story of the first Thanksgiving has been told, there is only one more thing to do – have a happy Thanksgiving and enjoy the time with loved ones, shopping and football.

For more information about the history of thanksgiving and the pilgrims, visit www.history.com.

News

Country gears up for holiday shopping

Malorie Paine

Managing Print Editor

With Thanksgiving on the latest date it has been since 2002, shoppers are getting an unusually early start on their holiday shopping.

Many stores will be opening between 6 and 8 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day rather than waiting for the “midnight madness” of Black Friday. Stores like Target, Walmart and Sears will be opening Thanksgiving evening. However, The Gap has plans to open more than 900 of its Old Navy stores from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day.

About 36 percent of the Millennial Generation shopped on Thanksgiving Day last year. Adults ranging from ages 18-24 spent on average \$326 dollars for the 2012 holiday season. The majority of the spending went to gifts for their families. Last year, on average, shoppers spent \$423 during the holiday shopping season.

Though this shopping season is not predicted to be a banner year for retail stores, the National Retail Federation, NFR, has expected to see a 3.9 percent increase in shopper spending compared to 2012 and a 3.3 percent increase over the last decade.

Several stores have bumped their typical December sales into November in an effort to entice shoppers. According to the NFR, over 50 percent of Americans have already begun their holiday shopping.

NFR president and CEO Matthew Shay says this could be so that consumers can spread their spending out. Consumers backed up Shay's belief in the Monthly Consumer Survey where 60



Shops along Broadway Street, like most stores across the country, are preparing for the post-Thanksgiving holiday shopping season. Nationwide, sales aren't predicted to increase much from last year; an increase of 3.9 percent is anticipated for the 2013 holiday shopping season. | **Pacer Photo/Whitney Lucas**

percent of shoppers say they began their holiday shopping early to “spread out [their] gift shopping budget.”

Several types of products are predicted to lead sales this season. Clothing and electronics are among the highest anticipated items.

Over 51 percent of shoppers say they would like to receive clothing, and 36 percent say they hope to receive electronic products, according to the Prosper Insights & Analytics Monthly Consumer Survey released in October.

Although products are high on consumers' wish lists,

gift cards are the highest requested item this season. The highest percentages of gift cards consumers are planning to purchase this season are for department stores and restaurants, 41 percent and 34 percent respectively.

While historically, Black Friday, the Friday after Thanksgiving, has been known as the largest and busiest shopping day of the year, shoppers do have other options.

The Saturday following Black Friday has been named Small Business Saturday.

American Express founded Small Business Saturday in 2010 as a way to encourage

shoppers to support business in their cities and towns. The company viewed this as a way to help stabilize local economies. Small Business Saturday is slated for Nov. 30. Shoppers also have the option to shop on Cyber Monday, which made its debut on Nov. 28, 2005. The term was coined by NFR's shop.org, and it is the largest day for online shopping of the year. This year, Cyber Monday will be held on Dec. 2.

Shoppers are estimating purchasing 51 percent of their items online, according to the Prosper Insights & Analytics Monthly Consumer Survey for

October 2004-2013.

NFR predicts a total of \$602.1 billion will be spent during the shopping season. This can account for as much as 40 percent of some retailers' total annual sales.

NFR is also estimating between 720,000 and 780,000 seasonal employees will be hired for this holiday season.

Though some consumers do wait until December, November has proven to be the largest, by percentage, month for consumers to begin their holiday shopping.

News

Shopping
trends
ages
18-24

Black Friday

Facts from
National
Retail
Federation

Cyber Monday

Plan to spend
on average
\$216.36
this holiday
season

Least likely
group to
say that the
economy will
affect their
shopping

Most likely to
celebrate one
of the winter
holidays

Super Saturday

Top 3 Gifts:
Clothing
Books/CDs/DVDs
Gift cards

Small Business Saturday

Pacer Graphic/
Malorie Paine
Tomi Parrish

For more
info visit:
www.nrf.com

News

Students obtain highest FFA honor: American Degree

Mary Wortham

Pacer Writer

Each year, thousands of students across the country are excited to gather for National FFA Convention to receive awards of many types, but none are more excited than the FFA American Degree recipients.

"The journey towards my FFA American degree started before I was in FFA. It started when I watched my brother, Cody Stewart, compete and partake in the Westview High School FFA. This is when I decided that I wanted to put all my heart and dedication into the program," local recipient Seth Pierce said.

"... I wanted to accomplish a goal I set for myself, and that goal was to receive the highest degree in FFA, The American Degree. I accomplished that goal this past Saturday in Louisville, Ky. thanks to the encouragement and support of my family, friends, FFA Advisors and God."

There were 3,577 American FFA Degree recipients that were honored during a ceremony at Louisville's Freedom Hall during the eighth general session of the 86th National FFA Convention & Expo on Saturday, Nov. 2. The ceremony was broadcasted live on RFD-TV and streamed live online at iHigh.com/FFA.

Out of these vast numbers, 161 recipients were from the state of Tennessee and 24 were UTM students.

"I'm just keeping a family tradition," said Thomas Bell, a sophomore Agriculture major.

Students do not need to be from an agriculture background to receive this degree.

"I didn't grow up on a farm, but joining FFA my freshman year of high school began my love for agriculture. I am a better leader, student and person because of everything FFA has taught me over the past five years. Receiving my American FFA degree is a milestone in my life and a true honor," Whitney Cervantes, a



UTM student Whitney Cervantes receives her American FFA Degree, which is the highest degree a FFA member can earn. | *Photo Credit/Whitney Cervantes*

UTM recipients of the FFA American Degree

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Thomas Bell | 13. Blake Kerley |
| 2. Greg Berford | 14. Spenser Maloney |
| 3. Robert N. Berner Jr. | 15. Dalton A. Mann |
| 4. Kensey A. Catlett | 16. Stephen Mark McBride |
| 5. Whitney Cervantes | 17. Maryanna McClure |
| 6. Crystal Climer | 18. Radford McDavid |
| 7. Jayme Spence Freeman | 19. Seth Pierce |
| 8. Shelby Gean | 20. Julie Smith |
| 9. Cambridge Lynn German | 21. Jameson Smith |
| 10. William Taylor Gibbons | 22. Jacque Vaughn |
| 11. Karlyn Hayes | 23. Benjamin Randall Walker |
| 12. Samantha Dawn Hill | 24. David Walker |

2013 recipient, said.

The American FFA Degree is awarded to FFA members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to FFA and made significant accomplishments in their Supervised Agricultural Experiences, or SAEs.

With SAEs, students are encouraged to learn by doing. With help from their agricultural teachers, students develop an SAE project based on one or more SAE categories: Entrepreneurship, Placement, Research and Experimentation and Exploratory.

"The degree is a huge honor. I worked very hard with my horsemanship SAE to earn my American degree," Kensey Catlett said.

"... I zipped up that old blue corduroy jacket that holds so many memories for the last time. I can't thank the FFA organization enough for making me the woman I am today."

FFA was founded by a group of young farmers in 1928. Their mission was to prepare future generations for the challenges of feeding a growing population. The thought behind it all was

to show that agriculture is more than planting and harvesting—it's a science, it's a business and it's an art.

According to the National FFA Organization website, in order to receive the degree, students must complete the following:

- Receive a Greenhand FFA Degree, Chapter FFA Degree and State FFA Degree.
- Have been FFA members for at least three years.
- Have completed at least three years (540 hours) of high school agriculture classes, or 2 years of high school agriculture

classes and one year of college agriculture classes (360 hours.)

- Have graduated from high school one year prior to the National FFA Convention at which their degree will be awarded.

- Have maintained detailed SAE records, which demonstrate outstanding planning, managerial and financial skills.

- Have earned and productively invested at least \$7,500, or have earned and productively invested at least \$1,500 and worked 2,250 hours beyond scheduled school hours through their SAEs.

- Have a record of outstanding leadership skills.

- Have a record of participating in community service activities.

- Have maintained a "C" grade average or better.

"It takes a lot of hard work and dedication, but it feels good to walk across stage and receive the golden key," Agriculture Education major, Shelby Gean said.

For many members, it's not only about an agricultural experience, but a social and future oriented one as well.

"Receiving my American Degree was the last step in succeeding my FFA goals. I 'suited up' for the last time on Saturday, Nov. 2, 2013 in Louisville, Ky., with four of my sorority sisters. As my FFA career comes to an end, all the achievements accomplished are my motivation to strive for bigger and better," Sam Hill said.

Many who are involved in FFA make lifelong friendships with others from around the country.

"Receiving my American FFA Degree is the greatest honor of my FFA career. Even better than that honor was sharing the experience with friends I had made nationwide throughout my years in FFA and watching them

See **Degrees**, Page 9

News

Finals are approaching: Start studying now

Maigan Bradbury

Pacer Writer

It might be a scary thought for some, but final exam week is coming up at UTM. For the ones who are nervous about it, the reason could be because they don't practice the best study habits. There are a lot of tips that can be told as far as how much sleep to get, how much caffeine to consume or just how to study in general.

Stephanie Mueller, an adviser to students with special needs at UTM, works with the Student Success Center on campus and deals with this topic a lot in her line of work and has ways for students to make better grades.

She said that the methods she teaches have been proven to work. The first topic she spoke about was food.

"If your idea of breakfast is a Twinkie and a Diet Coke, that

won't cut it," Mueller said.

She said that students need protein because it is good for the brain, and it will function better. She is extremely against energy drinks. She explained that she understands they may work for a while, but they will make you crash. A little caffeine is okay, but not too much.

Next, she tells students to start studying early. Mueller said to study around an hour a day up until the test. During this hour, she says to take a break every 10 or 15 minutes. The break can be a snack break or a bathroom break, or the student can take the time to walk around if he or she is starting to get sleepy.

She advises not to look at any electronic devices while on a break. This will only hinder the studying that has been done. Also, whatever is being studied should be the last thing the

student sees before he or she goes to sleep at night.

Mueller understands that this is the age of technology, but she strongly recommends that once the studying is done to go straight to bed so that the brain will process the information.

Some other advice Mueller gave was to "study your worst subject when you're at your best."

What she meant was to make sure to study the subject that is the most difficult before it gets late and the eyes begin to get heavy. Also, each time the material is studied, mix up the order. If this isn't done, the brain will expect the exam to be in that order, and that is normally not the case.

"Flashcards are your friends," Mueller said.

She explained that flashcards make it easier to comprehend subjects as long

as they are used correctly. Also, it is a confidence boost when the stack of "I know these" cards gets taller than the "I don't know these" cards.

"Highlighting is not magic," Mueller said.

She said to never just go through and highlight everything that needs to be studied, because the student could end up highlighting everything he or she sees. Mueller said to read through everything first, and then go back and see what is most important. The main objective to studying is to "shred," which means to throw out everything that isn't important.

To stay organized, Mueller said to write down a time to study. She said to "make an appointment with you." Write down when, where and what subject in a planner.

Finally, Mueller wants everyone to be their own cheerleader. She realizes that a lot of people get test anxiety, but there is a way to get around it. She says that staying positive is the key to being successful in test-taking.

Mueller went on to explain that she knows how difficult it can be during December finals because the holidays are coming up, and there are a lot more things on students' minds than their exams.

"Students just want the finals to hurry up and end," Mueller said. "It will come to an end, but it may not be the end you want."

The Student Success Center is located on the second floor of Clement Hall. Mueller and the rest of the Student Success staff will help whoever needs them.

Degrees from Page 8

them go across stage in Louisville and hearing the excitement for each recipient from their parents, advisors and close friends," Former Tennessee State FFA President Stephen McBride said.

To many students, it's a real milestone in their lives. For the past three to five years or more, these students have done nothing but breathe blue and gold. Now they have to start a new chapter in their life. "Achieving the American FFA degree meant so much to me because the FFA has been such an important part of my life, and being able to walk across the national stage and accept the most prestigious award they hand out was a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Cambridge German said.

Many of these students are

leaders of their communities and were built and taught so through the organization they love, the National FFA Organization.

"As I was waiting for my name to be called and to walk across stage, I took time to reflect on the many memories and friends I made while I was in FFA. That was one bittersweet moment for me, as I realized that my career as a member is over and my jacket is now retired," said UTM recipient Julie Smith.

"FFA is one of the best youth organizations out there and I would encourage anyone to be involved in it. Thank you, FFA for allowing me to 'GROW' as leader, 'Step Up and Step Out' of my comfort zone and most importantly 'Ignite' my community."

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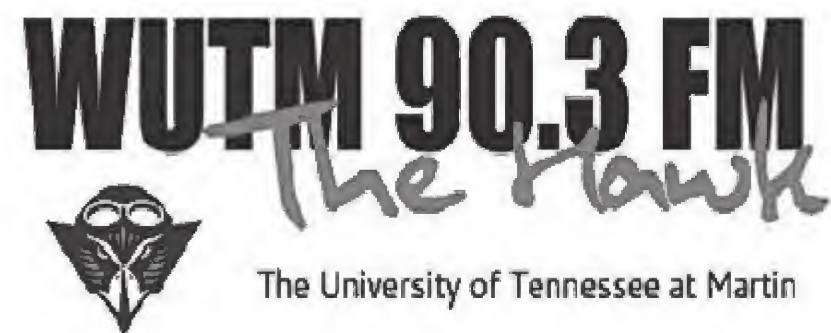
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Advertisement courtesy of UTM Senior Nursing Students Anita Langley, Lacy Pearce, Levi Griffith, Alex Rapp, and Kiley Kosinski.

Arts & Entertainment

Vanguard Theatre presents Neil Simon's 'Fools'

Courtney Pearson

Staff Writer

The Vanguard Theatre, led by director Ken Zimmerman, has once again delivered a successful show, with seats being sold out for several of the eight nights of performances. Students from all over campus came to watch Neil Simon's *Fools*.

In a fractured, fantastical and magical land where flowers are mistaken for fish, where the color yellow doesn't stick to your fingers and where the purpose of man's existence is 12, the Vanguard Theatre represents the townspeople of an off-beat, tiny Russian village known as Kulyenchikov.

The story goes that a teacher by the name of Leon Stephonovitch Tolchinsky, played by Eric Brand, a senior Communications major, wanders upon the cursed Russian village of Kulyenchikov. He falls in love with Sophia Zubritsky, played by freshman English major Shelby Frye. Sophia is the daughter of Dr. Zubritsky, played by junior Theatre major Casey Williams, and Lenya Zubritsky, played by senior Theatre major Stephanie Klink.

Although the curse of stupidity has fallen heavily on the poor Zubritsky girl, who just learned how to sit down that week, Leon takes the challenge to teach her something within the next 24 hours so that the curse will be broken, and he can marry his new love.

The townspeople, such as Something Something Snetsky, played by Reuben Kendall, and Gregor Youskevitch, played by senior Communications major John Nicholson add humor to the play by walking on the stage and spewing ridiculous one-liners. Other townspeople include junior Theatre major Cody Jarman, sophomore Theatre major Mark Connell, freshman Secondary Education major Jonathan York and freshman Nursing major Blakely Whited.

Although the majority of the cast has been in past productions, many of the cast are first-time Vanguard performers.

"It has been really exciting. We're working with a lot of veterans and underclassmen. It's always scary to



Above: (From left) Shelby Frye, Casey Williams, Stephanie Klink and Eric Brand discuss Sophia's education. Bottom left: The cast takes a bow. Bottom right: Leon is affected by the curse. | **Photo Credits / Doug Cook**

put something in an underclassman's hands, but this is an exceptional group," Brand said.

Frye, one of the new cast members with Vanguard Theatre, got the lead female role of Sophia Zubritsky.

"I was so surprised to get the role! I almost vomited on the cast sheet," Frye said.

As the first Vanguard performance in the new and improved Fine Arts Building, the seating is seen as a bit of an adjustment; however, many say the small space is good for both

the actors and the audience as it creates a more intimate atmosphere.

"The Little Theatre, for this show, is holding 76 seats. That may change depending on how much space is needed for the stage," said Karen Johnson, Administrative Assistant for the Fine Arts Department.

One of the major challenges of this performance of *Fools* was the gap in between the first weekend and second weekend.

"You would think the gap in between performances would

affect the performance, but we have been fine-tuning the show for so long that I would wager we could have gone for a much longer period and come back with a decent momentum," Brand said.

The good news is that it didn't hold back the cast. Some believe it even helped give the last few performances just the right push.

"The gap made things a bit difficult, but I think that our refresher rehearsal helped, and we pulled through pretty well. I am

definitely planning to audition for more Vanguard productions in the future," Frye said.

Although the gap can be a strain on the actors, it can also be a great experience and can help offer a whole new element.

"It's good training for the actors, and it gives people on campus a greater degree of choice. So far the actors really like that the house is always full," said Doug Cook, Chair of the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts and Production Designer.

Arts & Entertainment

Allies' annual Halloween Drag Show draws crowd

Diamond Adams

Pacer Writer

This year's 3rd annual fall drag show was held Saturday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom. The drag show had a good turnout from many UTM students and out-of-town friends and supporters. Admission was \$5 and had to be purchased at the door.

Allies is a GLBT organization that believes in the elimination of discrimination in all forms. Persons of all sexual orientations and cultural backgrounds are welcome. William Abrams is the current Allies president, and Maya Thornton is vice president. Chris Karmosky is the current faculty adviser.

As a student organization, Allies strives to provide a safe and tolerant environment for all on the

UTM campus. Allies welcomes and encourages the participation of students, faculty, graduates and community members of all sexual orientations.

As a GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender) organization, Allies strives to raise awareness about diversity and hopes to unite the community. Their goal is to prohibit discrimination through understanding and acceptance by means of several social and political events throughout the school year. They hope to provide group members with a firm support system.

The proceeds from the show will be used to fund future events and to bring educated presenters to campus in order to promote an understanding of the GLBT community.

"The drag show is mostly just a whole lot of fun for people to come

see, but it certainly contributes to the visible diversity at UTM," said Morgan Robertson, a transgender student at UTM.

Allies had several returning performers in the show. Keri Luxuri from Los Angeles, Calif., Sapphire Dior from South Fulton, Ky., Natalie Symone from Murray, Ky., Johnny Pride from Paducah, Ky., Soco Dupree from Nashville, Tenn. and UTM's very own Midnight Mojito are just a few who performed in the show.

A costume competition for the audience was planned, but not many audience members were aware of it. No winner was named for the contest, but there were several participants from the show and audience members that were dressed in the Halloween spirit; Barbie, Beyonce and Tinkerbell made an appearance as well as many zombies and such.



Review: 'Ender's Game' astounds audience

Jackson Britt

Staff Writer

Ender's Game is set in the future after an alien race almost exterminated the human race. The alien race, known as the Formecs, was thwarted by a brave pilot named Mazer Rackham, played by Ben Kingsley.

The Formecs retreated from Earth, but they were far from defeated. Ever since the Formecs retreated from Earth, the military began recruiting the most intelligent children to go to Battle School and learn how to become perfect military leaders.

Ender Wiggin played by Asa Butterfield, is chosen to go through this training and is considered to be the most promising of all the recruits.

The first half of the movie is focused around Ender as a character and his experiences with the other children. The strong performance of Asa Butterfield allows director Gavin Hood to easily illustrate the character's development of Ender as he attends Battle School. To Colonel Graff, played by Harrison Ford, Ender is his star pupil.

Ender doesn't just win, he proves that he is the best, and no one comes close to him. Ender dominates every challenge given to him. Although the second half of the movie is focused

more on narrative, there are still many moral dilemmas that help Ender's character develop even more.

Asa Butterfield, Harrison Ford and Ben Kingsley give stellar performances in the movie; however, the rest of the cast is not so convincing. For the most part, the supporting characters are not on screen enough to properly develop.

Many relationships are simply glossed over and not given the attention they need. Major Anderson, played by Viola Davis, is not given enough time to be Colonel Graff's moral antithesis, even though she is clearly meant to be. Many of the characters suffer from this problem while others were simply not cast in the right role.

The special effects in the movie are fantastic. Hood does an excellent job of giving the movie a dark feel from beginning to end. The sleek, futuristic designs of the space stations and star ships also complement the movie's setting. Every scene is beautiful and gives the movie the sci-fi feeling that it needs.

Overall, *Ender's Game* is an entertaining movie. Even with its low points, *Ender's Game* is an exciting, thought-provoking story of adversity, coming of age and manipulation that will have audiences asking questions long after the movie is over.

How to stay entertained on a tight budget

Tony Hudson

Staff Writer

Despite being a small town, Martin and the surrounding areas still have a variety of entertaining things to do on a college-friendly budget.

Starting with the Martin area, there are fast food places that offer student discounts. Everyday from 2 to 5 p.m., Taco Bell has happy hour, lowering some of their products to \$1. The Loaded Grillers, Limeade Sparklers, freeze drinks and medium drinks are all included in that discount. From 11:30 to 1 p.m., Pizza Hut has a buffet for \$5.99, complete with cinnastix, pizza, pasta and salad. For the students who live off of campus, the mail sometimes includes coupons to Wendys,

Huddle House, Burger King and McDonalds.

Stepping away from eating, there are other activities that are ready to be enjoyed. The movie theater is always an option. Getting a good laugh or cry from a movie never gets old. Ticket prices are usually \$7, but Tuesday nights are discounted and are \$5. If you don't want to visit the one in Martin, Union City has one as well. Skating and bowling are also offered in Union City and are local favorite spots. For night owls, midnight bowling with the lights off is always fun. There's also the Discovery Park of America in Union City, which brings insight to West Tennessee. Natural history, regional history, study of energy, space and transportation can all

be explored there. Providing entertainment and information, a trip to this place would be a treat at any age.

For outdoors lovers, Reelfoot Lake State Park is near Martin. Created by an earthquake in 1812, Reelfoot Lake continues to bring a variety of animals, scenery and activities to the area. A host of fish, birds, snakes, beavers and plants can all be seen. Fishing, picnicking, visiting the museum, going for a boat ride or simply walking on the boardwalk can all be enjoyed.

There is always something for everybody. Every day may not be the Soybean Festival or Homecoming, but Martin and surrounding areas always provide an outlet for students to enjoy themselves.

Features

UTM UNLIMITED



Natalie Boyd, P.S.E.P.P. Count Me In coordinator is featured on the far left and her sister-in-law, Deborah Williams-Boyd, is featured on the far right with her family celebrating her youngest son's graduation from UTM. (From left) Kobie Boyd, Debrasha Patrice Boyd, Sylvester Boyd II, Deborah Williams-Boyd and Sylvester Boyd Sr. | *Photo Credit/Deborah Williams-Boyd*

They sought education; they became family

Ashley Marshall

Staff Writer

Years ago, two city women moved to the small town of Martin for a college education and ended up staying.

The women, Deborah Williams-Boyd and Natalie Dickerson-Boyd, both of whom grew up in Memphis, graduated from UTM, met their husbands at UTM and are employees of UTM.

They also are sisters-in-law because their husbands are brothers, and both believe that UTM was meant for their families.

Williams-Boyd began her UTM journey in August 1974.

"Having a full paid scholarship to Vanderbilt, Spellman, Memphis State or Howard wasn't enough. I did not want to stay in Memphis," Williams-Boyd said.

However, she didn't like Martin, so she returned home, but not for long.

"I packed up my things and left in the middle of night. When I

got to Memphis, my dad told me that he would not accept a quitter," Williams-Boyd said.

Williams-Boyd later met her husband, UTM alumnus Sylvester Boyd Sr., who graduated with a B.S. in Accounting.

"I was sitting in the lobby of Clement trying to study some accounting. I was lost as two left feet! He happened to come in and ask me what I was doing. I told him [I was] studying accounting. He said, 'Oh that's easy, I am an Accounting major.' I acquired my own personal study person and the rest is history," Williams-Boyd said.

After earning a B.S. in Business Education and a MBA at UTM, Williams-Boyd went to work in the university's Business Affairs office. She has been employed for 34 years in the same office in which she did her work-study as a student.

Her three children also graduated from UTM: two sons, Kobie Boyd with a MBA and B.S. in Management; Sylvester Boyd II with a B.S. in Health and Human

Performance and a daughter, Debrasha Patrice Boyd, with a MBA and a B.S. in Business Education.

"UTM has been the place in which every one of my immediate family members received their higher education. My husband and I felt that if it was good enough for us, then it was certainly good enough for them also," Williams-Boyd said.

Williams-Boyd also collects elephants, many of which are in her UTM office.

"I have about 400 of them: swizzle sticks, ice cubes, lamps, rings, tables, china, teakwood, etc. ... even a pachyderm from Saudi Arabia, Korea and Taiwan. Many faculty members bring me souvenirs when they travel," Williams-Boyd said.

Williams-Boyd added that UTM has had a huge influence on her life.

"It has allowed me the opportunity to help a vast number of students with their education. I am of the persuasion that I have a role in demonstrating that UTM is the campus that cares, and

that no other person or position is better than any other person or position. If I were to describe UTM in one sentence, I would say you start out as a piece of raw material, and if you stay long enough, and graduate, you are a finished product and ready for the world," Williams-Boyd said.

Her sister-in-law, Natalie Dickerson-Boyd, said that UTM has greatly influenced her life as well.

"My UTM experience was memorable simply because I obtained a Social Work degree, met the man who would become my husband of 24 years, Roy L. Boyd, established lifelong friendships and grew socially and spiritually," Dickerson-Boyd said.

Dickerson-Boyd said that when she got to UTM, she suffered a bit of culture shock but that did not scare her away.

"I had the opportunity to have such wonderful people in my life that not only spoke great words of encouragement [and] displayed concern and love, but

were committed to always making sure that their doors were open to a little homesick girl from Memphis," Dickerson-Boyd said.

During her time at UTM, Dickerson-Boyd lived in Atrium Hall (now Cooper Hall) with most of the members of Chi Omega sorority and was a member of the Black Student Association and the Social Work Honor Society.

Like Williams-Boyd, Dickerson-Boyd has seen the wide-ranging influence UTM has had on her family.

"There have been many in my family who have attended and graduated from this university: my husband, two brothers-in-law, one sister-in-law, one niece, two nephews and two or three cousins. So, you see, UTM was not only the place where we all met each other, but it became a place where we studied and prayed together. It is the root of our being a family," Dickerson-Boyd said.

See **Family**, Page 14

Features

UTM UNLIMITED

Service to others brings couple together

Tony Hudson

Guest Writer

Charley Deal is the vice chancellor for Alumni Relations and Annual Giving at UTM and on the opposite end of campus, his wife Shannon Deal is the director and nurse practitioner for Student Health and Counseling Services, SHCS, and program director for the different programs within SHCS.

The Deals have been married for 16 years. The couple met at Camp Celebration, a camp for mentally disabled kids and adults, in the 1980s. Shannon Cheshire was the co-founder of Camp Celebration and called UTM asking about food services. When the caterer arrived at the camp, Charley Deal was by

“Establish your independence and take accountability for your actions.

his side. After the couple met, a friendship formed and eventually, a marriage happened.

Shannon Deal is from Memphis and graduated from the UT Health Science Center in Memphis and finished with a B.S. in Nursing and a Masters in Nursing.

Hickman County, Tenn., is where Charley Deal grew up, and he attended UTM and graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration and his

MBA. He still wants to achieve more and is currently pursuing his doctorate degree.

When he isn't busy, hunting and building objects are his hobbies. Creating sculpted wood pens is another hobby for him.

“[It is] very calming, and I am grateful to have learned,” Charley Deal said.

You may not see him around campus much, but that's because he is always on the go. From WestStar to supporting his kids in extracurricular activities, his day always starts early and almost always ends late.

Shannon Deal's hobbies include reading, animals, baseball, teaching Sunday school classes and anything involving her kids. She is also a huge Chicago Cubs fan and always knows when a game is on.

When Deal isn't tending to ill students, she is tending to her own kids. Alex, their 13-year-old son, loves everything outside from hunting to baseball and they also have an 11-year-old daughter, Jessie.

During Charley Deal's undergraduate career, he was very active on campus. Along with school, intramurals and working for housing were two things that made up a large portion of his college life. While working for housing, he quickly excelled. He progressed from resident assistant to housing assistant to assistant hall director to, ultimately, hall director.

Being a hall director on a college campus provided Charley Deal with many memorable college moments.

“Challenge in a respective way. Don't take no for an answer. A lot of times, people don't fight. Always keep your goals and fight. Also, don't forget to give back to your university.

“I had 42 international students, and it was very interesting and entertaining. Talking to them made me appreciate all of the freedom we have in our country,” Charley Deal said.

Shannon Deal's college life was quite different. Memphis is a big city with much to do, but at the UT Health Science Center, campus life varied from UTM. The lack of organizations didn't stop Shannon Deal. She was heavily involved in community service, such as St. Jude and Camp Celebration.

“There weren't many student organizations on campus. The organizations that were there focused on health and nursing groups,” Shannon Deal said.

The campus might have lacked student organization opportunities, but sporting events in the area were a different story.

“It was an exciting time for Memphis basketball. The games would be like another world,” Shannon Deal said.



Charley and Shannon Deal enjoy spending time together helping others and sometimes sneaking away for a moment alone. The moment featured above was in Italy. | Photo / Charley Deal

As for advice for current students, she said that being responsible and making smart decisions are important.

“Establish your independence and take accountability for your actions,” Shannon Deal said.

“Take time off and give yourself a break. It's important to get rest. If you work hard, make time for

yourself and relax sometimes.”

Charley Deal emphasized that students should work hard.

“Challenge in a respective way. Don't take no for an answer. A lot of times, people don't fight. Always keep your goals and fight. Also, don't forget to give back to your university,” Charley Deal said.

Family from Page 13

Dickerson-Boyd has two children. Cameron is a senior Pre-Med student at UTM, and Mariah is a freshman at the University of Memphis.

After allowing UTM to help her, Dickerson-Boyd now gives back to the campus as the P.S.E.P.P.,

Personal Safety Empowerment Partnership Program, Count Me In coordinator.

“Serving in this role allows me to not only educate students, faculty, staff and the community about sexual violence and how it can be prevented, but [it also allows

me] to help be a mouthpiece for individuals/victims who are afraid to speak out and against a crime that has affected so many,” Dickerson-Boyd said.

“I do what I do best – serving people.”

Dickerson-Boyd said that

serving people and working to attain positive thoughts are important parts of a student's experience.

“While [you're] a student at UTM, strive to think at an altitude beyond your attitude, so that you will move into a place

of higher and more powerful thinking. ... Always have your hands open to not just receive for yourself but to give of yourself,” Dickerson-Boyd said.

Sports

Hard work yields results on and off field for McNeil

Cameron Graham

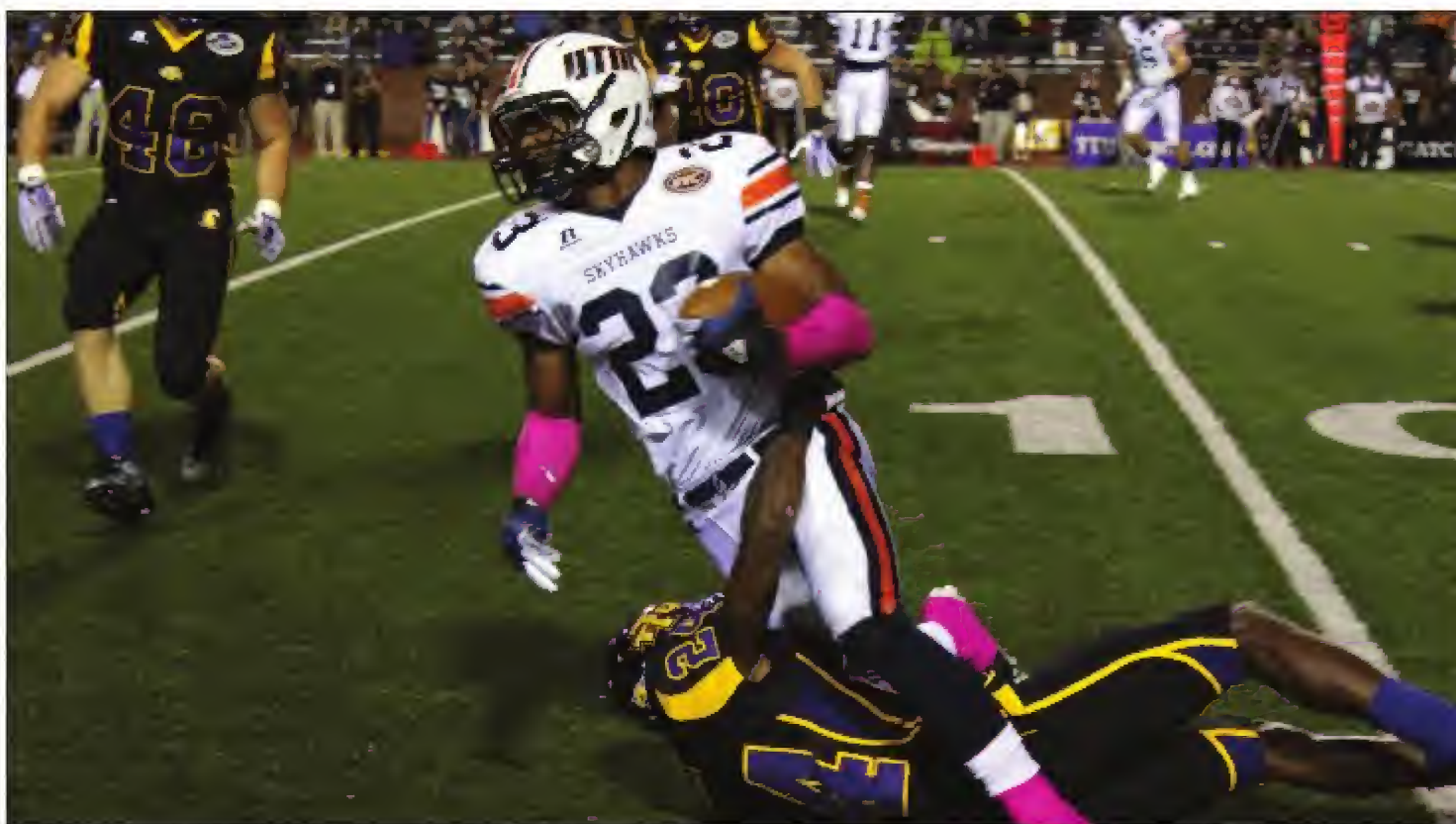
Staff Writer

Football is a demanding sport physically, emotionally and in many other aspects of life. If there is one person that can attest to this, it's DJ McNeil. Many know him for his success as a tailback for the Skyhawks, but football has more meaning for him than simply running a ball. With life lessons and personal achievements that can potentially be rewarded from the game of football, McNeil practices the ethics of the game even off the gridiron.

Born on Nov. 8, 1991, to Dennis and Tina McNeil, DJ McNeil was introduced to a conventional household, with his father being employed as a law enforcement officer. McNeil was urged to work hard during his youth. Taking his father's advice to heart, he decided to pursue football.

"I put pads on and stepped on the field for the first time, and just fell in love with the game," said McNeil.

It isn't just the glory of scoring a touchdown that drives



When UTM traveled to Tennessee Tech earlier this season, senior running back DJ McNeil rushed for 171 yards on 24 carries and tallied one touchdown in the team's 28-17 victory. | *Pacer Photo/Bradley Stringfield*

this athlete, however, but the discipline when challenged with such a sacrificing sport.

"You've always got to be prepared and on your game; that helps keep my priorities in line, I like that," said McNeil.

At Briarcrest High School, McNeil played under Coach Major White, where he assisted in the team's 7-5 record and advancement to the second round of the state playoffs. Also before his college career, he was named

as a member of the Commercial Appeal's Best of the Preps All-Metro team.

Being a running back also had external effects on McNeil's character because of the physicality of the position.

Playing in the backfield since his earliest days in the game contributes to the experience that he uses even to this day.

Having to act quick on most plays, he remembers to utilize fundamentals from his past, as well as much needed advice from his current team.

When off the football field, McNeil is like any other ordinary student in terms of going to class and other daily activities. He is currently earning a Bachelor's degree in Health and Human Performance.

While there is a possible future career with football for McNeil, he considers his assets by making other preparations for employment after graduation.

"I might actually be up for a job with the Memphis Grizzlies," said McNeil.

McNeil has worked tirelessly in pursuing his goals, having earned many rewards through the game of football. Using both his formal and informal education, he hopes to give back to the sports community in gratitude that it has given him meaning and shaped him as an individual.

COLUMN

Skyhawks close out season with EIU

Bradley Stringfield

Managing Editor, Online
Sports Editor

This Saturday, the Skyhawks will take on the back-to-back Ohio Valley Conference champion Eastern Illinois Panthers in the last game of the regular season.

The Panthers, who are ranked second in the FCS Coaches' Poll, are 9-1 and a perfect 7-0 in the OVC. Their only loss was a 43-39 loss to Northern Illinois, a team who is currently 10-0 and ranked sixteenth in the BCS Standings.

The Skyhawks (7-4, 5-2 OVC), who just upset Eastern Kentucky, will have their hands full with EIU's offense.

The Panthers literally lead the OVC in every offensive category while the Skyhawks rank second in scoring defense, third in total defense and third in passing defense.

The matchup that everyone will be watching is Panther's quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo and the Skyhawks secondary.

Garoppolo has had no problems shredding defenses this year. The Skyhawks pass rush, led by DJ Roberts and Tony Bell will have to keep Garoppolo on the ground to keep the game from getting out of hand.

The key for a Skyhawk victory may very well be on special teams. EIU ranks near the bottom of the conference in nearly every statistical category with the

exception of punt returns, they rank first.

While the Panthers received an automatic birth in the FCS Tournament for winning the OVC Championship, UTM is still trying to find their way in.

For a team that started off the season with wins against Chattanooga and Central Arkansas, the Skyhawks had a mid-season slump that all but ended their playoff hopes. However, with a chance to knock off the No. 2 FCS team in the country in their own stadium, the Skyhawks shouldn't need any extra motivation to end the regular season on a good note.

As Dan Fouts once said, "It's the last game of the year, can't hold anything back."

The Pacer Player of the Week

- Career-high 44 points against Quinnipiac
- Led Skyhawks to overtime victory
- Joined the 2,000 point club; currently has 2,033.



Jasmine Newsome

Photo Credit/Sports Information

Sports

Roberts uses mind, grind to find success

Tony Hudson

Guest Writer

While many people know DJ Roberts for his football accolades, he has been just as successful off the field as well.

Roberts was born and raised in Knoxville, Tenn., and attended Austin-East High School. From an early age, he learned the value of education and that it cannot be replaced.

Roberts likes to live by Malcolm X's phrase, "Education is our passport to the future. For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today."

With that as a constant reminder, he doesn't take a second of his education for granted.

Roberts, a Health and Human Performance K-12 major, not only values his education, but also the education of others.

Roberts chose Health and Human Performance for his love of working with children and wanting to keep them fit. Throughout the year, he participates in what is known as a "pig skin pal." He visits Martin Elementary and plays with and reads to the students.

"I really enjoy interacting with the kids and knowing that I play a role in their lives," said Roberts.

Besides education, family played a role in Roberts attending UTM.

"My cousin, Kenny Jones, was playing here at the time," said Roberts. "We always wanted to

play college football together. On my visit, it also felt like a family-oriented team, which helped me decide to come here."

Roberts credits his mother for helping him become the person and player he is.

"My mom motivates me," said Roberts. "She showed me that hard work pays off. She works two jobs, sometimes three, to provide for my sisters and I. I truly thank her for that."

The hard work that his mother instilled in him really paid off in last year's season. Roberts earned All-Ohio Valley Conference second team defense and OVC Defensive Player of the Week in a win against SEMO with eight tackles. At the end of the season, he ranked third in the OVC

with tackles for loss (11.5), fifth with fumble recoveries (two) and racked up 53 tackles (28 solo). He also recorded a season-high nine tackles (six solo) in a win at Memphis.

"My favorite football moment is last year when I blocked the field goal against Eastern Kentucky University to give us the win. That was our first time in school history to beat ECU."

After a long day of working hard in the classroom and on the field, Roberts likes to wind down by playing video games, fishing or working out. Roberts is a guy that loves the simple life but also has big dreams. After he graduates in the spring, he plans on pursuing his dream of the NFL, his Master's degree and

becoming a football coach. He also dreams of traveling to Paris and taking a picture under the Eiffel Tower.

Looking back over his time at UTM, Roberts has enjoyed all of it. The memories made and the people he has met are priceless. He says he not only learned about himself but the world.

"I wouldn't change anything I experienced during college," said Roberts. "What I went through made me the strong man I am today. One important thing college has taught me is responsibility. To the current and future UTM students, have fun while you're in college but remember why you are here. Education is always first."

Players earn Adidas OVC Weekly Football Awards; recognized by CFPA

Sports Information

Ben Johnson and Jackson Redditt, both of the UTM football team, have been recognized by the Ohio Valley Conference for their performances in a 16-7 victory at Eastern Kentucky on Saturday.

College Football Performance Awards also announced that Redditt earned Week 12 Honorable Mention Kicker Performer of the Week while junior Tony Bell was named Week 12 Honorable Mention National Linebacker Performer of the Week.

Johnson was named adidas

OVC Defensive Player of the Week while Redditt brought home adidas OVC Specialist of the Week. Both players helped lead the Skyhawks to their first-ever win in 12 tries at Roy Kidd Stadium dating back to 1973. The win also clinched yet another winning season, the fifth in the last eight seasons under head coach Jason Simpson.

A 6-2, 235-pound redshirt senior linebacker out of Primm Springs, Tenn., Johnson registered a game-high 11 tackles, an interception and a pass breakup against the Colonels. He also added 0.5 tackles for loss for a defense

that conceded just 225 yards of total offense and held Eastern Kentucky to season-lows in points (seven) and rushing yards (80). Johnson's interception effectively sealed the Skyhawk victory, as he picked off Kyle Romano's pass and returned it 42 yards late in the fourth quarter.

Johnson currently ranks second in the OVC in tackles (91, 8.3 per game) and fourth in tackles for loss (11.5). He is responsible for 319 career tackles, which ranks eighth all-time in UTM program history.

Redditt enjoyed one of the best games of his career on Saturday,

drilling three field goals from 38, 51 and 45 yards out while also successfully booting his lone PAT attempt. He opened the game with a pair of field goals in the first quarter, the last of which was his career-long of 51 yards. One of his biggest kicks of the day, however, came in the fourth quarter when his 45-yard attempt split the uprights to make it a two-possession game at 16-7.

The 6-2, 190-pound redshirt sophomore out of Mt. Juliet, Tenn. leads the OVC in PAT percentage (1.000, 31-for-31) while ranking third in field goals (12, 1.09 per game) and eighth

in scoring (67 points, 6.1 per game).

Bell tallied seven tackles, 1.5 sacks, a forced fumble, a fumble recovery and a quarterback hurry against Eastern Kentucky on Saturday. The 6-1, 200-pounder out of Memphis currently leads the OVC in sacks (10) and tackles-for-loss (14) while his 72 tackles rank ninth in the league.

UTM will look to build its playoff resume this Saturday, Nov. 23 when it squares off against No. 2 Eastern Illinois at Hardy Graham Stadium. Kickoff time is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Schedule from 11/20 - 12/4

Men's Basketball vs. UMKC 11/20 | Rodeo @ Troy 11/21 | Men's Basketball vs. Jackson State 11/22 | Football vs. EIU 11/23

Women's Basketball vs. Missouri 11/23 | Men's Basketball vs. Lipscomb 11/25 | Women's Basketball vs. Evansville

11/25 Men's Basketball vs. Bethel 11/27 | Women's Basketball vs. Winthrop (Pittsburgh, Penn.) 11/29

Men's Basketball @ UNLV 11/30